

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

(i) *re : Short supply of Sandalwood to S. W. Factories at Mysore and Shimoga.*

Sri M. H. JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN (Sirsi).—I call the attention of the Minister for Food and Forests to the short supply of sandalwood to the sandalwood oil factories in Mysore and Shimoga due to largescale smuggling.

Sri K. H. PATIL (Minister for Food and Forests).—Sir, in reply to the above calling attention notice I make the following Statement.

The News item to the effect that there was shortage in Sandalwood supply to the Sandal Oil Factories due to large scale smuggling of Sandalwood is completely erroneous. The average supply of Sandalwood by Forest Department to Sandal Oil Factories in the State per year during the last five years is 2,481 tonnes. As against this, till the end of January 1973, Forest Department had already supplied 2,000 tonnes and by the end of March 1974, another quantity of around 400 tonnes will be supplied. It may thus be seen that the short fall in the sandalwood supplies to the factories is negligible, if at all.

The existence of sandalwood smuggling, more particularly across the border, cannot be denied. The value of sandalwood has shot up from about Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 30,000 per tonne within the course of one year. In addition to this, rules governing the transport and possession of sandalwood in the neighbouring States are comparatively less rigid. Sandal occurs in the vast stretch of forests along the State Border. All these factors have helped to prompt smuggling. Government have however taken vigorous steps during the last about 18 months to combat this. A very large number of offence cases have been booked by the Department in which apart from seizure of the sandalwood a large number of vehicles used for smuggling have been seized and the culprits arrested. During the last three months in the border areas, the Forest Department has booked 38 cases involving sandalwood worth Rs. 1.23 lakhs. The entire produce and one vehicle engaged in smuggling have been seized.

Forest Subordinates who have booked major offences are now being rewarded to a small extent as an incentive. Secret Service Fund which did not exist in Forest Department has been set up. Government have recently sanctioned the purchase of Guns for the Forest Department so that subordinates in these interior areas could be armed. We have moved the Government of India to insist on a Certificate of origin and transport permits before sandalwood is

(SRI K. H. PATIL)

allowed to be exported., I recently had discussions with the Minister for Forests of Kerala and suggested amendment of Forests Rules of his State to prohibit possession of Sandalwood more than 5 Kgs. without authorised permits. He has agreed to this suggestion.

It cannot be denied that the production of sandalwood in this State has come down during the last one decade. The best sandalwood zone is in the rainfall belt of 35 inches to 50 inches and large extents of such forest areas have been released in the past in this belt for agriculture and cultivation. In the cleared areas though sandalwood is left standing, as it is a parasite on other living trees, when the host trees are removed sandal stems stagnate and die. Thereafter, there is no scope for establishment or regeneration either. In addition to this, over about half the belt in which sandalwood occurs, a virus disease has been taking a heavy toll. It is these factors which are affecting sandalwood production. We have been moving the Government of India to strengthen research on the control of spike disease. In the interest of encouraging the growing of sandal, Government are now paying 50 per cent of the value of sandal as bonus to the Malkidars even where sandal is the absolute right of the Government Forest Department has been taking up its regeneration in new plantation areas covering about 10,000 hectares each year. A new forest circle is proposed to be constituted to attend to tending of sandalwood and its improvement.

It will be clear from the above that Government is aware of smuggling and is taking intensive measures to curb it. Supply of sandalwood by the Department however, to the Sandal Oil Factories has no bearing on the smuggling of sandalwood. Forest Department takes up for exploitation only dead, dying and overmatured trees from all over the State while the smugglers in the border areas exploit indiscriminately. This has no relevance to the supply of sandalwood to the sandal oil factories.

ಶ್ರೀ ಎಂ. ಎಚ್. ಜಯಪ್ರಕಾಶ್ ನಾರಾಯಣ್.—ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರೇ, ಮಾನ್ಯ ಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳು, ಈ ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಕಡೆಯಲ್ಲಿರತಕ್ಕ ಗಂಧದ ಮರಗಳು ಸ್ವಗಲಿಂಗ್ ಆಗದೇ ಇರುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ತೆಗೆದು ಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ವಿಶೇಷವಾದ ರಕ್ಷಣೆಯ ವಿಷಯವನ್ನು ಹೇಳಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಆದರೆ ಫಾರಿಸ್ ಡಿವಾರ್ಡ್ ಮಂಚ್ ನವರು ಪ್ರತಿವರ್ಷ ಗಂಧದ ಮರಗಳನ್ನು ಕಡಿದಂಥ ಜಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಗಂಧದ ಸಸಿಗಳನ್ನು ಬೆಳೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಬೆಳೆಯದೆ ನೀಲಗಿರಿ ಸಸಿಗಳನ್ನು ಬೆಳೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಬೆಳೆಯುವ ನೀತಿಯನ್ನು ಇಟ್ಟುಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಕಳೆದ 5 ವರ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರ. ವರ್ಷ 2471 ಟನ್ ಸಮುದ್ರ ಮರಗಳನ್ನು ಫ್ಯಾಕ್ಟರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಕೊಡುತ್ತಾ ಇದ್ದೀರಿ. ಎಷ್ಟು ಮರಗಳನ್ನು ಎಷ್ಟು ಟನ್ ಸಮುದ್ರ ಕಡಿಯುತ್ತೀರೋ, ಅಷ್ಟು ಸಸಿಗಳನ್ನು ಹಾಕುತ್ತೀರಾ ? ಅಷ್ಟು ಬೆಳೆಯುತ್ತಾ ಇದೆ ಎನ್ನುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಹೋಲಿಕೆ ಕೊಡುತ್ತೀರಾ ?

ಶ್ರೀ ಕೆ. ಎಚ್. ಪಾಟೀಲ್.—ಎಷ್ಟು ಕಡಿಯುತ್ತೀವೋ ಅಷ್ಟು ಬೆಳೆಯುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಅಂಕಿನಂಪ್ಪ ಇಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರೂ ಕಡಿಯುವ ಗಿಡಗಳು ಎಷ್ಟು ಅಗುತ್ತವೋ, ಅಷ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಕಡಿಮೆ ಆಗಲಾರದಂತೆ ಬೆಳೆಸುವ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮ ನಡೆದಿದೆ.